



UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE
Chief Financial Officer
Assistant Secretary for Administration
Washington, D.C. 20230

October 8, 2003

PROCUREMENT MEMORANDUM 2003- 08

INFORMATION

MEMORANDUM FOR: Heads of Contracting Offices

/Signed/
FROM: Michael S. Sade
Director for Office of Acquisition Management and
Procurement Executive

SUBJECT: JAVITS-WAGNER-O'DAY PROGRAM and National
Disability Employment Awareness Month

The Javits-Wagner-O'Day (JWOD) Program provides employment opportunities for nearly 40,000 Americans who are blind or who have other severe disabilities. In 1938, the Wagner-O'Day Act was passed under President Franklin D. Roosevelt in order to provide employment opportunities for people who are blind by allowing them to manufacture mops and brooms to sell to the Federal Government. In 1971, under the leadership of Senator Jacob Javits, Congress amended this Act to include people with severe disabilities and allow the Program to also provide services to the Federal Government. Over sixty years later, as a result of this extraordinary socioeconomic program, Federal customers are provided with a wide array of quality products and services, while allowing thousands of people with severe disabilities to lead more productive and independent lives, pay taxes, help support families, and join in the American work experience.

October is National Disability Employment Awareness Month. The purchase of JWOD products and services by Federal customers helps battle the 70 percent unemployment rate faced by this untapped labor source. The Department of Commerce has a long tradition of supporting the JWOD Program. The JWOD Program uses the purchasing power of the federal government to buy products and services from participating state and private nonprofit agencies dedicated to training and employing individuals with disabilities. Let us celebrate by continuing our support of the JWOD Program through its contracts.

JWOD Program is a statutorily mandated source. We must ensure that we properly procure mandatory items from JWOD in accordance with Federal Acquisition Regulation 8.7, and that we fully capitalize on opportunities to utilize JWOD. As the presidentially appointed DoC representative to the Committee for Purchase from People who are Blind or Severely Disabled, the Federal Activity that administers the JWOD Program, I encourage you to support the JWOD Program through your organization's contracts.

For more information, updates and answers to frequently asked questions regarding the JWOD Program, visit internet site www.jwod.gov. Should you have any questions, please feel free to contact me on (202) 482-4248.

cc: T.J. Garcia